لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

August 1962

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EDITORS

S. D. AHMAD M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India. He declared that God had conferred upon him the dignity of Prophethood. He claimed that he had received this blessing through being a perfect follower of the Holy Quran. He claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and the expected Messenger of all the religions of the world. He explained that God had raised him for the purpose of re-establishing the dominion of Islam and to shed light upon the true teachings of the Holy Quran. With him, in fact, had started a new era, the renaissance of Islam.

One startling historical disclosure he made, was that Jesus Christ had escaped death at the crucifixion and had subequently travelled to Kashmir, where his tomb still exists at Srinagar.

When Hazrat Ahmad published his claims and revelations received by him, he encountered a severe storm of opposition from all quarters and all communities. In spite of this opposition God began to strengthen his voice and people began to follow him. At the time of his death in 1908, he had gathered around him a group of faithful and staunch followers not only in India but also in other countries, numbering hundreds of thousands.

After his death in 1908, he was succeeded by the Late Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin Sahib as his First Khalifa. At his death in 1914, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, was elected as his second Khalifa.

He particularly undertook a vast programme of the propagation of Islam, and under his guidance, the Movement is carrying on vigorous missionary activities throughout the world. There is now a net-work of Ahmadiyya missions in almost every free country.

Any information or literature about *Ahmadiyyat* can be had from the Ahmadiyya missions in different parts of the world or direct from

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This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles, nor does it accept any responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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Absolute Unity of God

و ما ارسلنا من قبلك من رسول الا نوحی اليه انه لا اله الا انا فاعبدون .

"And We sent no Messenger before thee but We revealed to him, *saying*, 'There is no God but I ; so worship Me *alone*'." (21 : 26)

The verse gives a beautiful argument in favour of the Unity of God. It purports to say that all the Divine Messengers and great religious Reformers who appeared among different nations and countries at different times testified with one voice to the Oneness of God which was their common mission. In spite of the fact that with the passage of time the teachings of these Prophets became tempered with and were subjected to distortions and interpolations, the belief in the Unity of God continued to be the basic principle of all these teachings. These

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Prophets and Messengers appeared among all nations and peoples and the greatest of them all, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, appeared at a time when the whole world was immersed in the Cimmerian darkness of moral turpitude, and idol-worship was rife among every people and country in one form or another and was practised in its most heinous form in Arabia where the Holy Prophet preached his Message of the Oneness of God. He carried on such an effective and relentless campaign against idolatory that it disappeared from Arabia never to return. Not only did he condemn and forbid idol-worship and enjoin and impress upon his people the worship of one True God but also gave unanswerable argument in support of monotheism and against polytheism and fully succeeded in engendering in the minds of his followers an invincible faith in Divine Unity and an equally implacable hatred for *shirk*...setting up equals with God. In four short sentences of one of its shortest *Suras*...Al-Ikhlas, the Quran has refuted and demolished in a most beautiful and effective manner four forms of polytheism. The first verse proclaims the absolute Unity of God. It says : "Say, He is Allah, the One". It means that out of ignorance and perversity man invents and indulges in most fantastic theories and ideas about God. But the central and pivotal fact about the Divine Being remains that He is absolutely One in every respect and manner. He is neither the beginning nor the end of anything and He is not like anything, nor anything is like Him. To regard anything like Him is to impugn His absolute Unity.

In the words, "Allah, the Independent and Besought of all," the Quran has demolished the second kind of *Shirk* i. e. to ascribe Divine powers and attributes to other beings and things. The verse says that God has need of nobody but all beings and things have need of Him. It is therefore foolish and futile to have recourse to beings and things which themselves are wholly dependent upon God. The third verse, viz : "He begets not, nor is He begotten" refutes and repudiates the third kind of polytheism i.e. the doctrine of God being the father or son of anybody. The verse means to say that God is eternal and everlasting. He has begotten no son who should take His place, nor is He begotten of anyone from whom

He should have inherited His Divine powers and attributes. He was always Independent and Besought of all and will ever be so. So we should worship Him and call on Him alone for the fulfilment of our needs and requirements. The verse "And there is none like unto Him", exposes the folly and futility of the fourth kind of *Shirk*. It signifies that it is beyond any created thing to be His partner in Divinity *i.e.* to be like Him in His person or attributes. God is far exalted and above that to which man can aspire. However high man may rise, he cannot even touch the fringes of the precincts of Divinity and will ever remain God's servant.

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This is the most sublime conception of the absolute Unity of God as taught and inculcated by the Quran.

At another place (2 : 256) the Quran has shed further light on Divine Unity. It says : "There is no God but Allah, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep (i.e. no interruption ever takes place in His works). To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that will intercede with Him except by His permission (i.e. God grants the prayer of His servants but no one should think that He can compel God to accept his prayer. It is after He has granted the permission to any of His servants that he can intercede with Him). He knows what is before them and what is behind them (i.e. He knows the past and the future. His knowledge is complete and all-comprehensive because full control is not possible without complete knowledge and complete knowledge is the never-failing accompaniment of absolute Unity). And they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He pleases (i.e. man can accomplish nothing except with the help of knowledge that he receives from God). His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth (i.e., not an atom moves in the heavens and the earth without His permission and every particle is subject to His control). And the care of them burdens Him not (i.e., the universe will continue to exist and function under the never-failing supervision and protection of God). And He is the High (i.e. every atom of the universe bears witness to His Almightiness and He is so exalted that human reason cannot attain to full comprehension of Him ; and

yet He is so manifest in His great works that every honest seeker after Him can attain to communion with Him". This is a very high and noble conception of the Divine Unity which the Holy Prophet gave to the world and for which he worked and suffered. He told the people of the world that Divine Unity consists in the fact that man should rise to such a high stage of spiritual exaltation as to become completely engrossed in One God and become yet one with Him. It is when man reaches this high stage of moral and spiritual development that he can be said to have attained the great object of his creation.*

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*The Holy Quran : Commentary Vol. II (Part II) pp. 1685-87

Three Stages in Spiritual Evolution

(From the writings of the Promised Messiah, peace and blessings of God be on him, rendered into English by A.R. Khan Bengalee).

It should be borne in mind that the verse :

بلی من اسلم وجهه لله و هو محسن فله اجره عند
ربه و لا خوف عليهم و لا هم يحزنون . 2 : 113

(He who has resigned his entire self to God and is righteous and does good, is entitled to reward from his Lord and he shall have neither fear nor anxieties), . . . indicates three stages of spiritual perfection, namely, '*Fana*' (self-annihilation), '*Baqa*' (regeneration) and '*Liqa*' (union with God).

The first part of the verse : اسلم وجهه لله *i.e.* has surrendered his entire self to God, implies that all one's faculties, limbs and possessions should be consecrated to God and dedicated to His cause. This state in spiritual development is called '*Fana*' (self-annihilation), for when a man resigns his entire self to God and devotes all his powers and abilities to the service of His cause, and completely gives up all personal pursuits and sensual indulgences, he, then, undoubtedly suffers a kind of death, which the mystics call '*Fana*'.

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The second part of the verse : و هو مومن *i.e.* is righteous and does good, refers to the stage of '*Baqa*'. When a person, after he has completely annihilated his self, and brought about a death over his animal passions, is resusciated under Divine inspiration and stimulation, and when after completely abandoning all sensual pursuits, begins to act again under Divine stimuli, he is blessed with a second life, which should be called '*Baqa*' or regeneration.

The third part of the verse :

فله اجره عند ربه ولا خوف عليهم و لا هم يحزنون

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i.e., he is entitled to reward, and shall have neither fear nor anxieties, hints to the stage of '*Liqa*' (union with God). It refers to his being entitled to reward from God and to his deliverance from fear and anxieties. When a person's knowledge of and faith in God, and his trust in and love for Him, reach such a sublime stage that the reward of his sincerity, faith, and loyalty is no longer a mere whim, fancy or conjecture, but is so sure, definite, visible and tangible that he feels he has actually got it, and his faith in the existence of God is so certain that he is, as it were, seeing Him; when all his apprehensions and fears regarding his future disappear from him, and he has not the least sorrow for the past or the present; and when he perceives all spiritual boons and blessings to be existent at the present time, then this spiritual stage which is entirely free from all uncertainties and misgivings, suspicions and doubts, and pangs of waiting or delay, is called '*Liqa*'. The word احسن signifies, as interpreted by the Holy Prophet, (peace and blessings of God be on him), that perfect spiritual stage at which man, at the time of worship, considers himself so near to God, as though he were seeing Him.

This stage of '*Liqa*' can be perfectly attained by a spiritual way-farer only when his human nature or identity is completely merged in Divine nature just as the colour of a piece of iron is completely lost in fire, so that, to a superficial observer there is nothing but fire. It is at this stage that some spiritual way-farers have fallen into error by mistaking this outward unity for real unity.

The godly persons who have attained to this stage or have been blessed with a draught from this fountain, have been, on account of their complete merger in Divine attributes, called by some mystics '*Atfalullah*' (children of God). Even as a man's son bears some similarities with him in appearance and features, these holy personages also, on account of their being completely imbued with Divine attributes, bear some affinity with the beautiful and excellent attributes of God. Of course, such terms (as '*Atfalullah*') have not been expressly used in the Islamic code, yet it is the Holy Quran from which the mystics have deduced

this term. The Holy Quran says :

فاذکروا اللہ کذکرکم آبائکم او اشـد ذکرا

i.e., remember God just as you remember your fathers. Now, it is obvious that if the metaphorical use even of such terms had been forbidden, God would not have used such expressions as would have provided justification for the use of such terms. At the stage of '*Liqa*', man sometimes performs such miraculous deeds as seem to be beyond human capacities and capable of being done only by Divine power. For instance, at the battle of Badar, our Holy Leader and Guide, the Greatest of the Prophets of God and the Seal of Prophets, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) threw a handful of gravel at the infidels. It was thrown not by any prayer but simply by his own spiritual power. But it displayed Divine power, and exercised such a supernatural influence on the opponents that none of them escaped its blinding effect on his eyes, and it produced such a state of perplexity and stampede among them that they all ran away in great confusion. It is this miracle that God the Exalted refers to, saying :

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و ما رمیت اذ رمیت ولکن اللہ رمی

When you cast that handful of dust and pebbles, it was not you who cast, it was God who cast it. In other words, this miraculous performance was effected by the Divine Hand which was working from behind the screen, it was not within the capacity of man.

The miracle of 'شق القمر' (splitting of the moon) was also accomplished by Divine power, because it was not accompanied by any prayer, only a movement of the hand, which was charged with Divine power, brought it about. Many other miracles of this nature were shown by the Holy Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). They were done simply by personal spiritul power, no prayer accompanied them. On several occasions, by putting his fingers into a little water contained in a cup, he increased it so much that the entire army, including the camels and the horses, drank from it, and yet the quantity of water remained the same. On many occasions, he

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satiated the hunger of thousands of persons by laying his hand upon a few loaves of bread. At times he blessed a small quantity of milk with his lips, and it was drunk by a legion with satiety. Sometimes he sweetened the saline water of a well by dropping into it some saliva of his mouth. Sometimes he cured severe injuries simply by laying his hand on them. Occasionally, through the blessings of his hand, he readjusted the pupils of some eyes, which had been dislocated by some blow received in battles. He worked many other miracles of this nature simply by his personal power, which, of course, had the Divine power hidden behind it.

The present day Brahmoo Samajists (a religous group among the Hindus, holding liberal views in religion—founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy), the philosophers, and the votaries of naturalism (*i.e.* those that deny supernatural agency, revelation, prophecies etc.) may reject these miracles, and they are bound to do so, because the sublime spiritual stage at which man is invested with Divine power, in miniature, is beyond their comprehension. So if they laugh at such miracles, they are helpless, because they have not as yet traversed any stage in the spiritual journey except that of infancy. Their spiritual condition is weak and imperfect; and they would fain to die in this state.

But more regrettable is the case of those Christians who regard some similar but inferior and hearsay miracles attributed to Jesus, as proof of his Divinity. They assert that he restored the dead to life and cured the paralytic and the leprous by his own power and not by means of any pyayer, and that he was son of God, nay, God Himself. It is to be regretted that these poor people cannot realise the fact that if such miracles make a man deserving of being called God, then our Holy Prophet is by far the more entitled to God-head because the miracles shown by him are far superior in dignity and number to those shown by Jesus, (peace be on him). Moreover, our Guide and Leader, the Holy Prophet, (peace and blessings of God be on him,) has not only shown such miracles himself, but has given the start and opened the avenue for a long chain of such mira-

cles to be shown by his followers till the Day of Resurrection, and, as a matter of fact, such miracles have always been shown by them in all ages according to the needs and requirements, of the time and shall continue to be shown in this way till the Last Day. The extent to which the holy soul of this community has been blessed with Divine power has no parallel in other communities. So how foolish it is to regard a human being as God simply because of some such miracles being shown by him ! If such miracles can make a man God, can there be any enumeration of gods ?

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It should, however, be remembered that such miracles, although wrought on behalf of God, cannot, and should not rank with those special acts of God that are done by Him without the instrumentality of any other will except that of His own. So when a prophet or a saint performs, not by means of prayer, but by his own spiritual power, any supernatural act that is beyond the capacity of man, then this act of the prophet shall yet be inferior to those Divine acts that are done openly and directly by God Himself with His perfect power. In other words, the miracles worked by prophets must have some defect or weak point in them in comparison with those Divine acts that are done directly by God the Exalted so that to a superficial observer they may not look alike. This is why the Rod of Moses, (peace be on him), in spite of its turning into snake several times, remained, after all, a rod pure and simple. Similarly the birds of Jesus, although their miraculous flight is borne out by the Holy Quran, were after all nothing but dust ; it is nowhere mentioned by God that they turned into real living birds. But the miracles accomplished by our Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, manifested the greatest amount of Divine power, as he was the most perfect, the most exalted, the most sublime and the fullest manifestation of Divine glory and power. So our discerning power fails to adjudge them as performances of a human being of any stage of perfection. Nevertheless, we still believe and firmly that there is surely some hidden disparity between the acts of God and those of the Holy Prophet, (peace and blessings of God be on him).

What I mean to say, by what I have written above, is

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that, at the stage of '*Liqa*', on occasions of spiritual exuberance man does perform Divine acts, and the person who passes a part of his life in close contact with him does witness miracles of the nature mentioned above because, at the time of such spiritual overflow, man is imbued, on a small scale, with Divine character, and his kindness represents Divine mercy and his indignation, Divine wrath. Sometims, without offering any prayer, regarding something, he says, '*Be*', and it comes into being. At times he casts an angry look on some person, and, as a result, some calamity befalls the latter. When he looks at a person with pity, the latter becomes an object of Divine compassion. Even as the Divine uttering of '*Be*' produces the desired result immediately and for good, similar utterances of such godly persons also, at times of ecstasy and spiritual flow, do not fail to produce the desired effect. As already stated, the real cause of such extraordinary miracles being shown by such persons is that, on account of their perfect union with God, they are imbued with Divine character and are permanently enveloped in Divine glory, and their True Beloved (God) raises the veil from His face, and embraces them, and, Himself being an embodiment of blessings, blesses His lovers' speeches, actions, movements, rests or reposes, clothes, houses, times and all their belongings. Then whatever comes in touch with them is blessed, without any prayer on their part. There are blessings at their houses, even the thresholds of their doors are blessed ; blessings are showered at the doors of their houses, and they always see the descent, and smell the odour of these blessings. When they undertake a journey, God, with all His blessings, is with them and when they return home, a river of light follows them. In brief, their real worth is known to none but God.

It should be kept in mind here that after the stage of '*Fana-fi-Allah*,' *i.e.*, the stage to which the clause اسلم وجہہ للہ *i.e.*, complete resignation to God refers, which the mystics call '*Fana*' and the Holy Quran, '*Istiqamat*', follows immediately the stage of '*Baqa*'. In other words, when a man, after being completely delivered from evil propensities, sensual desires and personal inclinations, reaches the stage of '*Fana*' and is well

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established in it, he is, at once, initiated into the stage of '*Baqa*'. But it cannot be attained, until and unless, one is well established in the stage of *Fana* and to turn to God in all circumstances, becomes his nature. It can be attained only when all formalities and artificialities in worship disappear, and like a natural vegetation, the green and waving branches of obedience and submission to God vigorously shoot out of the heart and every thing, considered as one's own, is practically made over to God, and while other persons find pleasures in sensual gratification, he finds perfect delight in worship and rememberance of God, and all his personal likes are superseded by Divine ones.

when a spiritual way-farer is firmly established in the stage of '*Liqa*', and its spirit permeates through his nerves and sinews and becomes part and parcel of his existence ; when he sees a light descend from Heaven, immediately after the descent of which all veils between him and God disappear ; when a very delicate and sweet love that did not exist before, develops in his heart and he experiences in his heart such solace, peace, tranquility and bliss as is experienced by a person when he meets and embraces a bosom friend after a long separation ; when the bright, sweet, auspicious, blissful, eloquent and delightful Words of God pregnant with glad tidings, begin to come down to him in all states—standing or sitting, sleeping or waking, in the manner of a cool pleasant and fragrant breeze that comes blowing over a garden in the morning and brings composure and delight ; when he is so attracted to God that his existence becomes impossible without the love and fond and affectionate remembrance of God and he is not only ready to sacrifice his life, honour, children and everything he possesses, but actually sacrifices them in heart ; when he is drawn towards God with such a mighty magnetism that he does not know what is the matter with him ; when his soul is so intensely illumined with spiritual light, as if, it were broad day light ; when he feels the strong currents of sincerity, love and loyalty flowing vehemently within him, and at every moment, he feels, as if, God has come down into his heart ; when he finds himself in this spiritual state with all its signs and concomitants ; he should

rejoice and offer thanks to his True Beloved, for he has reached the highest stage of spiritual evolution called '*Liqa*' or union with God.*

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* (Aina-i-Kamalat-i-Islam, PP. 62-71).

Divine Truths Reflected in the Universe

Mr. Bashir Ahmad Orchard

"Are you in doubt concerning Allah,
Maker of the heavens and the earth?"

Take a walk on a clear night and look up at the myriads of shining orbs which adorn the heavens. What you observe is only a nook of the universe; yet its vastness and the wonders contained within it surpass our comprehension. The more we ponder over the secrets and marvels of the universe the more do we see reflected in it the attributes of God. A starry night is a perfect setting for the remembrance of God.

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Infinite Space.

The universe exists in an ocean of space; and as we gaze into the depths of the night sky we are reminded that space is infinite. This is because space is nothing. It is the absence of something; and being nothing it must be limitless and boundless. Were there a limit to the dimensions of space then it must come to an end somewhere; but what would there be at the end? Either there must be something or nothing. If there is something then it must be occupying space; and if there is nothing then the end of space has not been reached. As we deliberate over this self-evident fact we are reminded that God is Eternal and Infinite:

"Allah is He besides Whom there is no God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining." (3 : 3)

We are also reminded that the life of the soul is infinite. It moves on from one stage to another on its journey of infinite progress. Regarding the souls of the righteous in the life to come Almighty God says in the Holy Quran:

"Their light will run before them and on their right hands. They will say, 'Our Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us; surely Thou hast power

over all things." (66 : 9)

Commenting on this verse Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, has said :

> "The unceasing desire for perfection shows clearly that progress in paradise shall be endless. For, when they shall have attained one excellence, they shall not stop there but seeing a higher stage of excellence shall consider that to which they have attained as imperfect and shall, therefore, desire the attainment of the higher excellence. When they shall have attained to this, they shall yet see another higher excellence and they shall continue to pray for the attainment of higher and higher excellences. This ceaseless desire for perfection shows that they shall be endlessly attaining to excellences."[1]

Incomprehensible Universe.

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Although the universe has its boundaries its domain and function is beyond the comprehension of the human mind to fathom. Unlike space it is impossible for matter to be limitless. Somewhere in the depths of space there exists the most distant of all the stars ; but its location is beyond the range of the most delicate scientific instruments used for probing into the universe.

The distances of the stars from us, and also from one another, are so great that it is inconvenient to measure them in miles. They have to be measured in light years. It is known that light travels 186000 miles per second and that the nearest star is four and a quarter light years away. That is to say the light from that star takes four and a quarter years to reach this world ; or if we work out the distance in miles it is approximately twenty five million millon miles. In endeavouring to comprehend such a distance the brain becomes severely taxed ; but this distance is almost negligible when compared to the greater astronomical distances which separate us from the stars in the remote regions of heavens. The best light telescope of today can see and photograph clusters of stars four thousand million

light years away ; and radio telescopes can contact stars six thousand million light years away ! These telescopic distances bewilder and stagger our finite minds.

As we cast our eyes across the starlit sky and think upon the insoluble mysteries of the universe we are reminded that one of the attributes of God is '*Latif*'—the Incomprehensible.

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The Sun.

The sun shines all the time ; but at night it is invisible because then the side of the globe on which we dwell is hidden from it. Nevertheless we do see its reflected light because it is the light of the sun which illumines the moon and planets.

Similarly God manifests Himself through His chosen servants. They reflect divine light in the same way that the moon and planets reflect sunlight. The prophets of God are bathed in an effulgence of divine light. Infact every Godly person radiates the light of God in proportion to his spiritual status.

Venus is the nearest planet to the earth and appears to shine more brilliantly than the others. As we gaze at this bright orb our thoughts contemplate on the attributes of God ; for in such a way they are reflected in the sunny lives of the righteous. We are reminded that we should make earnest endeavour to transmit the light of God's attributes in our lives through thought, word and deed. We should yearn to become aglow with the light of heaven and to develop the fragrance of holiness which is sweeter than the most aromatic perfume. The spiritual charm of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, has been beautifully described By Bhai Abdur Rahman[2] :

> "On his face in those days there was a peculiar lustre and a deep inner reflectiveness, tinged with an indefinable peace and joy, and a kind of bright spiritual light which shone on his countence."

Munhsi Muhammad Arura testified[3] :

> "Another face so pure, and lit up with such spiritual light, I have never seen in my life. That light and his magnetic personality were for me the greatest

argument in his favour. What we constantly hungered for was just an apportunity to have a look of that illumined face."[4]

Persons who enjoy a measure of spiritual illumination are able to recognise this subtle light in others who possess it. It is charged with magnetic attraction and draws together persons of similar spiritual semblance. Were two such persons among a large company of people they would quickly be drawn towards one another ; and this phenomenon establishes the truth of the maxim 'Like attracts like.'

The sun is the master of the solar system. Life on earth depends entirely on solar radiation. Were there no sun there would not exist a vestige of life on this planet. The earth would be a frozen ball hurtling on and on through the immensity of space ; and so would the other planets until, perhaps, they become the satellites of another star. The sun can function without its family of attendent orbs ; but they cannot function without the sun. The sun is the Master of the solar system. Likewise God is Master of the universe :

"Lord of all the worlds" (1 : 2)

As the planets are dependent on the sun so everybody is dependent on God ; and as the sun is not dependent on the planets so God is not dependent on anyone. The solar system reflects this great truth which has been emphasised in the Holy Quran :

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"Independent and Besought of all" (112 : 3)

The sun is different in structure to the planets which are continually revolving around it. The latter are great balls of rock and mineral while the sun is a sphere of burning gas. This fact reminds us that God is also different from His creation :

"And there is none like unto Him." (112 : 5).

The sun is the only orb in the solar system which generates its own light. The other worlds merely reflect it.

Similarly all divine light emanates from God and is reflected through His creation :

> "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth ..... Light upon light ! Allah guides to His light whomsoever He will." (24 : 36)

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The Planets

The Earth is one of the nine major planets revolving around the sun. They may be taken to symbolize the prophets for they are lit up by the light of the sun as the prophets are lit up with the light of God ; and as the planets never deviate from their course of orbit so neither do the prophets deviate from the path of virtue :

> "They speak not before He speaks, and they act only by His command." (21 : 28)
> "And it is not possible for a prophet to act dishonestly." (3 : 162)

Prophets are raised for the guidance of mankind. They are spiritual leaders of the highest order. It is no more than rank defamation to censure them as manifest sinners. The authors of the various books of the Bible have gone beyond all limits of propriety in attributing to them acts of drunkenness, adultery and murder. It is utterly absurd to suppose that debauchers and criminals can inspire people to righteousness. Even an ordinary preacher would be ostracized by his community were he found engaged in less serious transgressions. Thank God for His Word the Holy Quran which has exculpated the prophets from the heinous charges heaped upon them in the Bible.

Each planet travels at a different speed according to the distance it is from the sun. The rule is that nearer a planet is to the sun the faser it travels. Similarly the nearer a person is to God the faster he progresses spiritually.

Meteors

High up in space there are billions of meteors speeding around the sun. They have been described as the rubble and

dust of the universe. The majority of them weigh no more than a grain of sand though some are considerably larger. Meteors are continually entering the earth's atmosphere from outer space ; but no sooner do they enter than they burn up. The larger ones are often seen burning brilliantly as they fall towards the earth. What is generally called a shooting star is a meteor burning up as it flashes through the atmosphere. There is no such thing as a shooting star. It is a misnomer. Now and again large meteors reach the earth and they are distinguished as meteorites. Thousands of years ago a large meteor struck the Arizona desert leaving a crater 4000 feet in diameter and several hundred feet in depth. The year of the Promised Messiah, 1908 was marked by the fall of a large meteor in Siberia :

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> "A meteorite probably weighing hundreds of tons struck the earth in the wilderness of Siberia (1908). This area was examined by a scientific expedition in 1928. The scientists reported that the tremendous heat of the meteorite had scorched and killed trees and other plant life for 30 miles around it."[5]

The billions of small meteors may be taken to symbolize the human race. Everytime we see a falling meteor speeding across the heavens in its fiery death throes we are reminded how easily man may fall from Divine Grace. Let it bring to mind the necessity of our being ever watchful over our condition so that we may not also fall. None can afford to be complacent for even the mighty fall sometimes : and this is as much true in the spiritual field as in the political field. Steadfastness is the backbone of faith. There have been many who at one time in their lives were ardent devotees of their faith ; but in later years fervour and spirit diminished and they toppled to the dust like giant skyscrapers. Whenever we see a 'falling star' streaking across the night sky we would do well to meditate on the prayer :

'I seek refuge in Allah against the accursed devil.'

None except those who have drunk deep from the cup of '*Zanjabeel*' (76 : 18) are immune from the influence of Satan.

'*Zanjabeel*' means ginger and in the Holy Quran it has been used metaphorically to denote an extremely potent spiritual tonic which gives a believer power to overcome all difficulties and temptations.*

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Bright Stars.

Stars vary in brilliance. Some are so luminous that they are thousands of times brighter than the sun. The giant star Rigel is eighteen thousand times as bright as the sun; yet its brilliance would fade in the presence of Canapus which is eighty thousand times brighter than the sun. They may not seem to be so bright as we watch them twinkling in the distance; but the delicate astronomical instruments of the scientists reveal these facts.

Let us suppose that each star is an individual of the human race. Some shine so brilliantly that they belong to a small category of their own; and these may be likened to the prophets and saints who appear now and again on the spiritual horizon.

The world is full of the persons who are known as stars: Stars of the screen, stage and sport; and those society women who are regarded as social stars because of their poise or leading influence. But far and high above all of them are those who rank among the spiritual stars. It is true that they may not be recognised by the great majority of mankind; but they are recognised by God and that is what counts more than anything else.

Those who rank among the spiritual stars are persons of humble dispositions. In this century the most luminous of such stars was Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah. Infact, none has outshone him since the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of God be upon him). The Word of God descended upon him in abundance for in this age he was the Elect of the elect. Despite his lofty and exalted office he was an impersonation of humility. Regarding himself he wrote in a poem:

*The reader who is thirsty for more enlightenment on this stimulating subject is advised to study *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*, by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah.

"I am a mere worm of the earth,
Not even fit to be called a human being;
For men an object of contempt."

Whence the Universe

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As we endeavour to unravel the secrets of the universe we are automatically confronted with the question how this voluminous mass of matter comprising innumerable solar systems came into existence. Man's concern is really limited only to that small dot of space which is occupied by our solar system; and in that dot is the tiniest of specks on which he lives. It has been said that a million times a million atoms makes a lump too small to see; and it may well be true that in relation to the size of the universe the world is no larger than an atom.

Once again let us try to picture the immensity of the Universe. Our solar system is part of a gigantic galaxy of stars; and the Milky Way is only a part of it. Every star which can be seen with the naked eye is a unit of this galaxy; yet we are told by our leading astronomers that a trillion galaxies lie within range of our largest telescopes. That is to say a million times a million times a million; And no one knows how many more trillions of galaxies lie beyond the range of the telescopes.

Whence came the universe? Before matter became moulded into globular shapes no doubt there was a time when it existed in a different and extenuated form; but in this treatise we are not dealing with the chemistry of the universe. We are concerned with the original cause behind the creation of matter; and we are assisted from the knowledge that something cannot be created from nothing. This is a self-evident fact which directs us to the conclusion that there must exist an omnipotent power.

The source from which matter originated has been a stumbling block to many astronomers and scientists. Patrick Moore, a well-known astronomer has said:

". . .When we come to consider how the universe itself was created we run up against a blank wall."

Hoyle has also stated:

> "Material simply appears—it is created. At one time the various atoms composing the material do not exist, and at a later time they do."

Neither of these erudites suggests that God is the Creator; possibly they are atheists. The Holy Quran assures us that God is the Creator of the universe and that He is Omnipotent:

> "He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a thing, He does only say to it, 'Be;' and it is." (2 : 118)
>
> "Allah has the power to do all that He wills." (2:107)

Who is there who is not bewitched by the soft lustre of the moon? We are invited to take a stroll beneath the splendour of the heavenly canopy. The brilliant universe around us reflects the attributes of God - the Lord of all the worlds; and may we be reminded of them every time we raise our eyes to the starry heavens. Amen.

All Praise is due to Allah—Lord of all the Worlds

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1. The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam.
2, 3) Two of the devonted companions of the Promised Messiah.
4. Extracts from "*Scattered Pearls*" by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad M.A. p. 44.
5. The World Book Encyclopædia.

Ahmad in Praise of Muhammad

(Rendered into English by Sufi A.Q. Niaz)

What a marvellous light
And radiance is to be found
In the life and person
Of Muhammad : Indeed this is a mine
Wonderfully rich in rubies
Of priceless worth.
Beyond a shadow of doubt,
'Tis true the human heart
Gets clear of darkness
Only when it enters
The circle of his devotees ;
And, in the face
Of this evident truth,
I am really amazed
Of those unworthy people
Wantonly who turn away
From his table, seeking
Elsewhere to satisfy
The hunger of their soul.
Look wheresoever I may,
In the two worlds,
I can absolutely find no one
With the greatness and grandeur
Of this the greatest benefactor
Of the human race.
A hundred times Allah loathes

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The breast which harbours
Malice against Muhammad ;
And God himself annihilates
The worthless worm
That comes to number itself
Among his enemies.

If thou long to obtain
Deliverance from the lust
Of thy mind, *then come*
To include thyself
Among his devotees.
And if at all thou desire
That Allah should hold thee
Worthy of praise,
From the bottom of thy heart
Begin to sing his praises.
Of this if thou long for proof,
Become thou his admirer, and lover,
Then watch for results,
For the life and person
Of Muhammad, in themselves,
Constitute conclusive and shining
Proof of his greatness.
Verily, my head and my life
I freely offer as a sacrifice
For the blessed dust
Underneath his feet ;
And my devoted heart,
Every moment, is offering itself
At his altar. By his own
Beautiful locks I swear
To declare myself a devoted

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Slave of that radiant face.
Even on pain of being cut
To pieces in this path,
Or burnt alive, it is not possible
That I turn away from Muhammad.
In the service of the Religion
He gave to the human race,
I have not the slightest fear,
Even though the whole world
Turn against me, for myself
I am blessed with a touch
Of the firm Faith of Muhammad
Himself. Indeed it is easy
For me to tear myself away
Completely from this world,
And all its attractions,
By losing myself in contemplation
Of the charm and excellence
Of the life and the personality
Of Muhammad. In this blessed path
Every particle of my being
I offer freely as a sacrifice,
For myself I have seen
The surpassing beauty
Lies hidden in him.
No other teacher
Do I recognise, for I
Have been disciplined,
And cultured, in the school
Of this the greatest Teacher
For all times.
With any other sweetheart

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I have no concern,
Since my heart has been completely
Won by the beauty and dignity
From his eyes alone
I long for a look of love ;
And apart from the Garden
Of Muhammad, I long for
No other garden to live in.
For my wounded heart,
My friend, you need not
Look into my breast,
For to the hem of the Garments
Of Muhammad I tied it long ago.
Among the blessed
Winged creatures, I be the happy
Bird that has its nest
In the Garden of Muhammad.
He has illumined my life
With love, and for this
How I wish that this life itself
Be offered in sacrifice
To please the heart of Muhammad.
But even if I give my life
A full thousand times,
The sacrifice would still
Not be commensurate
With the dignity and position
Of Muhammad. With such awe
Has this Stalwart been vested
That in the whole world
There is none would dare
Measure swords with him.

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O you ignorant person,
Blinded by a feeling of enmity
Towards him, stumbling
And lost in the way, take care
How you conduct yourself
In the field of this hostility,
For you have the biting edge
Of the deep-cutting sword
Of Muhammad hanging over
Your head. The path of God,
Which the people have lost
Sight of, if thou care to look,
Thou shalt find indeed,
Among the children,
And the devotees of Muhammad
Among the Helpers of his cause.
And O thou that denieth
The grandeur of Muhammad ;
That, denieth too, the light
Manifest of the Faith
Of Muhammad, beware,
For even though
Miracles are not known
In this age, thou mayest,
Indeed witness them
At the hands of the servants
And slaves of Muhammad.

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The Value of Sanctions in Religion

(Ch. Abdus Salam Akhtar M. A.)

The greatest question which has faced man's speculation right from the moment thought itself began, is the pattern of man's birth in this cosmos, and the manner of relationship, it does, or it ought to have, with the Supreme Being. Neither tradition, nor law nor social attitudes could supply the answer. The question involves the essence of God, the core of every religious and philosophic problem, giving rise both to religion and philosophy. The prophet and the philosopher equally searched for the answer ; in principle, their purpose, to find the Ultimate Truth, is identical, but the methods of their quest determine the character of their attempted answers. The difference lies in the categories of the human thought processes employed. For the prophet or a religious thinker, intiution and inspiration are the criteria, by which he judges the validity of his approach. Revelation is the last arbiter for the truth of his result. The philosopher holds that the answer can only be given by intellect, reason, and critical investigation ; A-priori categories will therefore form the test for the truth of his solution. Yet both, in one way or the other, cannot altogether dispense with the devices employed by each. A religious thinker has to make recourse to critical evalution, many times before he prescribes rules and regulations for the achievement of an ideal. The philosopher or a scientist, too, relies on flashes of intuition, before he is able to see the truth of his principle. Human nature, in essence, thus, has an inborn tendency to fly to its nucleus, to feel respite on the Basis, where intellect and emotion, coincide. Whatever be the methods of approach, whether reason or intuition, the fact that they are employed by a man integrated, signify that the Ultimate Goal is neither a destination for reason alone, nor for emotion alone, but for both. The Holy Quran speaks of Divine Omniscience in the following verses :

> "Unto Allah belong the East and West, and withersoever ye turn, there is Allah's counten-

ance. Verily Allah comprehends all and knows all". (2 : 116).

The dimensions here spoken of, are not merely east and west; they also refer to the versatility of human calibre in devising approaches to fly to its nucleus, the genuine and instinctive urge to know the Supreme Being, and to realize Him. God Almighly says that the approach to Him is not limited to a particular channel, nor the instinct to realize him is a restricted impulse; just as a child overflows with emotion on the idea of seeing his parent, so a seeker employs all his faculties in his search for truth and bliss. It is neither an intellectual approach, nor an emotional drive, it is all nature dedicated to the realization of its Centre and Root. Personality might be divided or multiplied in mundane channels, but so far the Ultimate Goal of life is concerned, there can be no question of division of energies. In fact the truth of religion is illustrated only by this psychological fact, that whereas the scientific impulse carries nothing but speculation in its wake the religious attitude involves the whole of personality This idea is contained in the Quranic verse when it says :

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"Nay, whoever submits himself completely to Allah and is the doer of good shall have his reward with his Lord. No fear *shall come* upon such, neither shall they grieve." (2 : 113)

"i.e., A Muslim is a person who concentrates his entire self to the Divine Cause, in other words who dedicates his life to God and gives himself up to doing His will and winning His pleasure; attain constancy in doing good deeds purely for His sake, and devotes all his powers and abilities in His cause, that is to say, becomes entirely 'God's' both in faith and practice"[1]; for such people there is no fear, nor will they feel grief.

The fact that human nature, in all stages of its development, tends to fly towards a 'Nobler Ideal', over and above

the laws of cause and effect, has also been recognized by the Western thinkers. William Lillie, in his 'Introduction to Ethics' says :

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> "We must admit that there is, in our human nature, an urge, towards what is higher and better, which can never be explained in merely natural terms. There is more in living, than the satisfaction of our animal instincts ; there is what may be called figuratively an instinct to be better, to reach something new in the way of good action, an inspiration for the man to arise in me, that the man that I am, may cease to be."[2]

This natural tendency, however hazy and undefined it may be involves two essential factors for consideration :

(1) That the Supreme Ideal for human struggle is a living Reality, capable of arousing the noblest of sentiments.
(2) That such Ideal is not a goal for intellect alone, or for emotion alone ; it involves the whole of personality.

It is for this consideration, that we believe that true morality can not exist apart from religion.

True morality is based on religion.

Those European writers who contend that morality, as a force in human conduct, can exist independently of religion, commit a fallacy, which arises from a misrepresentation of religion itself. It is wrong to interpret religion in terms of emotion alone. When religion is undertood only as a department of human life, it repudiates the conception put forward by religion itself. These thinkers themselves believe, that even the Hebrew prophets maintained that God requires of man, instead of rites and sacrifices, "to do justly and to love mercy" (Micah VI. 8). Now doing just actions, and loving mercy is not emotion. It involves (i) a conception of the Supreme Ideal (ii) and a voluntary effort on the part of an individual to desist from doing some actions, and persist on doing certain other actions in order to achieve the goal.

Psychologically this two-way activity, which is not momentary or occassional, but requires a life-long struggle, cannot be based on mere emotion alone. Hence this definition, that "religion is a belief in the supernatural reality affecting the believer emotionally to impel him to perform certain actions", is entirely misrepresented for it comprises only half-truth. William Lillie, while making this definition does not seem to consider, that emotion, as such, is not a permanent basis of human consicious-ness, and it is not capable of sustaining a life-long activity, which is teleological in nature. Acts may be of different kinds. There are momentary impulsive acts generally of the reflex type; then are emotional acts to satiate temporary impulses; and then are moral acts of the types of greatest resistance involving an Ideal, assimilated in the act. To call such moral acts, as emotional, is to rebut the very basis of discrimination, and is therefore illogical.

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Another fact however cannot be ignored in this connection. Moral philosophies have been different in different times. In fact, there have been thinkers and sceptics like Hume and Hobbes, who destroyed the foundations of moralism itself, for they thought there was no metaphysical background to a truly moral act. But Religion, has maintained throughout a vividly metaphysical outlook by keeping God and man in a relation of close intimation. Right from the Hebrew prophets to the advent of Islam, Religion has kept up the ideal of supernatural Reality so tangible in the human mind, that even the greatest of sceptcial efforts have not been able to wash off the traces of human love for the Almighty.

In fact, one reason why Kant's theory of 'Duty for Duty's sake' failed, was that it did not get its life-blood from an eternal source. Apparently it had an illuring phraseology, for Kant said that duty as a moral action sprang from its own sources, and that it was a categorical imperative for every one to follow it. But how a conception can be a categorical "imperative, when it is cut both ways from the essence and ideal of life? That is one reason why Jacobi discarded the view of Kant stating that "Kant's will is a will that wills nothing".[3]

The truth is that morality, in whatever form it may exist,

cannot exist without what is called the 'summum Bonum' or the Supreme Ideal in life. This Supreme Ideal has been envisaged in religion of this Ideal, is sure to land it in a vacumm.

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The Philosophy of Commandments.

Having once for all, recognized that for a moral act, the Supreme Ideal is unconditionally imperative, it follows that the Ideal must be a Living Reality, and that the path leading to Him should not be a product of human conjecture, but enunciated and confirmed by Him. In the days of the immaturity of mankind, it was possible that rites and practices, born of the hazy ideas about Divine Being, and of the fantastic powers attributed to Him, could lead mankind astray, but it could not always be. Reason demands that a time should have come, as it did come, when God Almighty, accomplished His blessings on man, showed him a clear path of realization of Supreme God, and warned him against all that is evil and deterrent. So God Almighty says in the Holy Quran :

> "This day, have I perfected My blessings and bounties on you and completed all My endowments. I am pleased to see Islam as your religion". (5 : 4)

The idea that the true and straight path towards the Highest Ideal, should be chalked out and shown to human beings by Divine Being Himself was first hinted at, in the opening chapter of the Holy Quran, when we come across the prayer :

"Guide us in the right path". (1 : 6)

The idea behind the prayer is that the shortest course for human guidance can be prescribed only by Divine Authority, whose word is unchangeable and immutable. The man made laws are subject to variation and modification, for they are influenced by circumstances, conditions, and temper of the makers themselves. History shows that no law, worth the name, has remained in the same state, in which it was instituted, at the time of its promulgation. Even the Old and the New Testaments believed to have been sponsored by Divine Authority have not escaped interpolation and exaggerations, suffered at the hands of

those who handled and mishandled them later on. Thus from the history of Israel, we learn, that in the time of Nebuchednazzar, the books of Israel were burnt and destroyed ; then they were written by the Prophet Ezra, and of Ezra, we read in the Jewish literature :

"It was forgotten but Ezra restored it."[4]

This point makes this truth evident, that man-made regulations, however genuine and comprehensive they may be, at the time of promulgation, cannot work for all time. The trend of evolution in the intellectual faculties of man, demands that if an Ideal is to be followed by human effort, it must be outlined by a MIND over and above the frailties of human species. This truth has been best corroborated by the Quranic verse, which says :

"The Lord of mighty powers has taught him"
(53 : 6)

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This verse states that the Lord of the heaven and earth, the only Eternal Living Authority, the Supreme Ideal of our moral efforts, and the Nucleus of the Spiritual Universe, possesses powers capable of arousing love and action on the part of human beings.

The Law of *Shariat* and the Laws of Nature.

Having recognized that the Divine Authority alone, is capable of enacting a workable code for human conduct, we come to the question of the relation existing between the laws of nature and the Divine code for the guidance and regulation of human life. The study of the Holy Quran shows that God has put into motion two kinds of laws, for the purpose of reminding man of his duties and obligations and helping him along the path of progress. The laws of nature pertain to the working of various objects in this world, and their actions and reactions. Man's participation in the working of these laws, is almost mechanical for he is subject to cause and effect as soon as he enters the field. The law that *the fire burns*, immediately comes into effect as soon as he puts his finger in the flames. Similarly the law

that *light helps sight*, will come into operation, as soon as a person opens his eyes. But the law of *Shariat* refers to our spiritual progress. Here we find no rigidity and invariability as in the case of laws of nature. The Divine law of *Shariat* refers to the nobler elements in man, and appeals to his finest sensibilities. About the Holy Quran, containg the law of Shariat and the spiritual progress, God Almighty says :

> "This is a perfect Book ; there is no doubt in it ; it is a guidance for the righteous. Who believe in the unseen and observe Prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them." (2 : 3,4)

The Divine words "it is a guidance for the righteous", are significant. God Almighty leaves the truth to be accepted by our good Judgement and good sense. There is no compulsion. The various commandments, the '*Do's and the Dont's*' are laid bare to us, their significance, and value is made manifest, and the case is left to our discretion and to our volition. There are those who accept the limitations, the sanctions, and the restrictions on them, and they are known as righteous, and there are others, who refuse to come under obligations, and decline to accept what is revealed to them in the word of God. Their case is just like those, who prefer to adopt city life, voluntarily accepting all the municipal laws and regulations while there are others, who prefer to stay in the jungle. Anyone can see that the voluntary imposition of sanctions is a necessary step towards civilization. Jungle life, only because it is free from restrictions and sanctions, is no cause for rejoicing.

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Sanctions point to a future life.

It is a point of commonsense, that if this world were the be-all and the end-all of all existence, there was no point in the imposition of sanctions. The municipal corportion of a town or city enacts certain regulations, becuase it aims at the preservation of town's stability, and thinks that those who come after, should find the place better than their prodecessors. If this habitation of ours, were to exist eternally, and the cycle of births and deaths were to continue *ad infinitam*,, it would

have been wise (though not wholly) to farsake impositions of all kinds and to live a life of animal pleasures. In that case, sanctions in morality and religion, would be far-fetched, and any code, worth the name, would be superflous, for reason would demand that as hardsips and sacrifices are not to be compensated so why make sacrifices at all. There would be no answer to this question. In fact, this was the consideration which led Kant, to believe in Immortality. An English commentator, writing about him, says :

> "Kant considered that human immortality is another necessary postulate for morality. If we ought to attain a perfectly good will, it must be possible to do so. Immortality is a necessary condition of such a possibility".[5]

God Almighty says in the Holy Quran :

> "Does man think that he is to be left to wander without an aim". (75 : 36)

> "What ! do you think that We have created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us ?" (23 : 115)

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> "Surely We have created man in the best make, then We render him the lowest of the low, except those who believe and do good for they shall have a reward never to be cut off." (95 : 4-6)

These verses of the Holy Quran show that immortal life after this mundane existence is a necessity beyond doubt. One main reason for this, is that the Good must be perpetual. In the present existence, we have witnessed a gradual evolution of the idea of Good, mainly because of the exceptional sacrifices of those who had to face Neros in their lives, but like Socrates, they insisted on what was right. Their pre-mature end must be condoned, and the Ideal which they cherished must live, as they MUST live. Immortality, therefore, is a rational pre-requisite for all moral actions.

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Hegel's Theory of Punishment.

If Good should have perpetuity, does sin require punishment? This question in the present age, was first discussed by Hegel on scientific basis, when he said,

> "Punishment is demanded by the criminal. It may even be described as his Reward, though perhaps, a negative reward. When one acts rightly, there is normally no call for any external reward, though in certain circumstances, some reward may be felt to be appropriate. On the other hand, the man who aims at destruction is entitled to a negative reward. It is his right, and he ought to get it. The society that punishes him is not defrauding him of his due, but giving him what he deserves, or what he has earned."[6]

The reader will have realized that punishment, rationally considered, is more a logical consequence, than retribution. It not only deters the evil-doer, but stimulates a moral agent to do more good. One may say that the view 'Virtue is its own reward,' is not much augmented by the administration of punishment. But this view, in particular, requires ellucindation.

When we say that 'virtue is its own reward', we emphasize the self-sufficiency of virtue and its value as an end in itself. Yet the great Arbiter of deeds, God Almighty, Who weighs and evaluates the good and the evil, is not heedless to motives. An oppressor might escape retribution or vengeance, but he can not escape the hands of God. If he did, or could, the world would be reduced to a chaos. Forgiveness is one thing, judgement is another. It does not mean that forgiveness is out of place, or lies outside the moral cosmos. It has entirely different premises. Forgiveness comes, when the offender has already suffered pangs by way of remorse and repentence, but if both these qualities are absent, punishment is a logical conclusion. In fact it is the virtue of Islam alone, that it provides forgiveness to an offender. The Jewish and the Hindu codes of moral laws

are so rigid on this point, that the seeker's conscience shudders on the very idea of retribution.

The Promised Messiah's Verdict.

Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah of this age, has given the verdict on the value of sanctions in the law of shariat. He says :

"Nothing can be borne beyond one's capacity. God says :

لا يكلف الله نفساً الا وسعها

i.e. God does not intend over-taxing man's capabilities. The law of *Shariat* is not a gesture of God's creative powers, nor does it manifest His eloquence..... The Christians presume that man is incapable of acting upon the injunctions laid down in the Divine code. They do not seem to think, that if the Divine code was beyond man's capacity for action, why was it initiated at all ? The virtue in the Quranic teaching is that every injunction of this code fulfills a purpose, and brings up the faculties of man to a level of understanding, even revelation. The Islamic code of worship and of regulations, promotes the inborn faculties of man and rasies it to a high level of moral and spiritual earnestness."[7]

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1. From the writings of the Promised Messiah published in the Review of Religions, June, 1962, p. 196.
2. Inter. to Ethics pp. 341.
3. Jacabi (critiçism, of Kant quoted by Sidqwich).
4. Suke 20 a, Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol. 5.
5. Kant, "Critique of Practical Reason" Pt. 1, Chap. 2. Abbots Trans.)
6. (Mc Taggart : "Studies in Hegelian Cosmology".)
7. *Malfuzat* pp. 61-62.

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Freedon of thought in Islam and Christianity

Khwaja Zuhoor-ud-Din Butt

> "Is one who goes grovelling on the face (with head bent downward) better guided than he who goes upright (with head erect) on a straight path? Say, 'God had brought you forth and gifted you with hearing and sight and heart. Yet how few are grateful'." (The Holy Quran 67 : 23-24).

The above passage from the Holy Quran brings home to us the truth that man was made to act as a free agent. Two opposite illustrations from the animal kingdom are taken. One is the quadruped who walks on the earth with head bent down, the other is the man who walks with head erect. Looking to the formation and position of the respective necks of the two, we come to the certain conclusion that two different objects seem to have been designed by God in the creation of man and the quadrupeds.

Man can see his way at a long distance and can make a clear choice between the straight and the zigzag path. The quadruped however cannot do so. Man can move his head to the right and to the left, while the latter cannot do so. The conclusion is inevitable. Man has been created to find his own way and to discriminate between right and wrong, while the lower animals can not do so. Somebody else should do it for them. The man is to lead while the animal is to be led. Man is gifted with hearing, sight and heart" the three main organs for acquiring knowledge. He must show his gratitude to God by the proper use of these Divine bounties. In the above quoted verse, only three organs 'the hearing, sight and the heart, are mentioned. They are the three main organs for acquiring knowledge and the chief instruments of volition and represent all other human senses. Most of our knowledge comes to us through sight and hearing and the heart (or call it 'mind' if you like)

is the fountain-head of volition.

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The hearing and the sight are to be used for receiving information and the heart to form judgment and to exercise volition. The Holy Quran says :-

> "Hearts have they with which they understand not, and eyes have they with which they see not, and ears have they with which they harken not. They are like the brutes: Ye, they go more astray. These are the heedless." (7.179)

The above verses are not the only quotations that can be given from the Holy Quran. The Holy Book abounds in passages which appeal to reason and invites consideration and reflection.

In several passages the Holy Quran induces the readers to ponder over its teachings, with the help of his wisdom, knowledge, reason and judgment. The Holy Quran often refers to the various phenomena of nature and then concludes the argument in the following words :

> "Verily in this are signs for those who ponder, signs for those who understand, signs for those who remember : Will you not consider, they may ponder over it. In this there is a sign for those who reflect, a sign for those who consider and use wisdom, if you do but understand."

If a man is unable to appreciate and accept the teachings of Islam there ought to be no compulsion. Mark the following remarkable injunction of the Holy Quran :

> "Let there be no compulsion in religion, as the right way has been made distinct from error on rational grouds." (2 : 257)

The word used in the text is *Tabayyana* which means to make a thing clear by arguments and reasoning.

One of the texts in the Bible attributed to Jesus says ;" "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about

his neck and he were cast into the sea". (Mark 9-42)

According to this saying of Jesus a man must keep his questionings and doubts to himself. He shall not talk where he is liable to upset the faith of some believing souls. The man who will go about disturbing peoples' religious peace and upsets their religious beliefs deserves to be drowned with a millstone about his neck.

If you point out to a Christian the unreasonableness of the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus, his sonship, and the Vicarious atonement, you may offend and unsettle his faith, in these doctrines. According to the above quoted saying attributed to Jesus a millstone around your neck is what you deserve and the bottom of the sea is the abode for you.

Psychologists tell us that there is great power in suggestion. The text attributed to Jesus is a suggestion to violence and persecution.

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If Jesus recommends a millstone for the necks of those who upset the beliefs of the Christians and make inquirers out of believers and intimates further that drowning is too good for them why not take the hint and act upon it. He expresses a wish. Shall the Christians not fulfil it? History tells us that in less enlightened ages, the suggestion was not only carried out but vastly imporved upon by the Spanish Inquisition for instance.

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